

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL INNOVATION**  
***Eight School Districts Receive Funding from the N.C. New Schools Project***  
***to create new, smaller high schools***

**Raleigh**— Gov. Mike Easley announced today the first round of grants from the N.C. New Schools Project to reform high schools and better prepare students for the workforce and college. Eight school systems have been selected to receive the grants.

The funding will be used to create new, smaller high schools that will focus learning and will motivate students to make connections with both their teachers and to the world beyond high school. State Superintendent Mike Ward, N.C. Senator Walter Dalton and State Board of Education Chairman Howard Lee joined Easley in making the announcement.

“Improving high schools is critical to economic development in North Carolina,” said Easley. “In order to recruit new industries to the state, create more jobs, and build a more highly skilled workforce, we must ensure that our students graduate high school ready for college and for the workplace.”

The N.C. New Schools Project, an initiative of Gov. Easley and his Education Cabinet, is being coordinated by the Public School Forum of North Carolina. It was begun with an \$11 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The project aims to create 40 to 50 new and redesigned high schools across the state.

The eight school systems receiving grants are: Asheville City Schools in Buncombe County, Cumberland County Schools, Durham County Schools, Granville County Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools in Catawba County, Scotland County Schools, Wake County Schools and Winston Salem/Forsyth County Schools (*see attachment for descriptions of proposed schools*).

The districts will receive a total of \$334,000 in support services and funding for at least a year of planning to establish new, small and academically rigorous high schools. They will then be eligible for implementation grants to open the school and begin operations.

The first round of funding from the New Schools Project is focused on health science schools. Each of the grant recipients is committed to creating new high schools and schools-within-existing schools that have a focus on the health sciences. They will be developed in conjunction with regional health care and higher education partners.

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